

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
COMMITTEE MINUTES

JUSTICE & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, November 3, 2008 – 7:00 p.m.

Brookens Administrative Center, Lyle Shields Meeting Room

1776 E. Washington, Urbana

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anderson, Ammons, Carter, Gladney, James, Nudo, Putman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Hunt, Sapp

OTHERS PRESENT: Kay Rhodes (Administrative Secretary), Deb Busey (County Administrator of Finance & HR Management), Kathleen Liffick (Head Start Director), Jonte Rollins (C-U Area Project), Pius Weibel (County Board Chair)

CALL TO ORDER

Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call established a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM

MOTION by Carter to approve agenda; seconded by James. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Carter to approve Justice & Social Services Committee October 6, 2008 minutes; seconded by Gladney.

Weibel requested an amendment to the minutes reflecting his attendance at this meeting. Putman requested line 148 read as “Putman suggested the kick-off meeting take place so that a report from that group be available in May 2009 because it is at this time that the Trial Advocacy Class working with the League of Women Voters releases the court watching report.”

Motion carried as amended.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

MONTHLY REPORTS

MOTION by Ammons to receive and place on file the Animal Control September 2008 report; Court Services August 2008 report; and the EMA October 2008 report; seconded by James. **Motion carried.**

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Anderson asked for a motion to designate Bill Keller, EMA Director, as the NIMS Compliance Officer and Appointed Contact for Champaign County.

MOTION by Ammons to designate Bill Keller as the NIMS Compliance Officer and Appointed contact for Champaign County; seconded by Putman.

Ammons asked what the job responsibilities were for a NIMS Compliance Officer. Busey explained this position is responsible for keeping track of all compliance requirements for Champaign County and its officials. The NIMS officer will make sure all county officials stay up to date on training requirements in order to apply for federal grants. This position will also keep all certification records so when a department wants to apply for a grant and needs the County's NIMS compliance, they will only need to contact the NIMS officer to gather the information.

Carter asked what kind of compliance training. Busey explained it is very specific training having to do with Homeland Security issues and antiterrorism. Public Health does some of this training as well. This training is required for public officials so the community is prepared for an incident should one occur.

Ammons asked if the job description would need to be changed to include this duty. Busey responded the job description would not change because this responsibility is consistent with what the EMA Director already does. The only department the NIMS officer will not keep records for is the Sheriff's office because they have many more requirements and a system to maintain them is already in place.

Motion carried.

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

MOTION by Ammons to recommend to the County Board approval of Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Crisis Intervention Service Grant Agreement; seconded by Gladney. **Motion carried.**

ANIMAL CONTROL

MOTION by James to recommend to the County Board approval of Intergovernmental Agreement for Animal Impound & Control Services with the Villages of Broadlands; seconded by Putman. **Motion carried.**

HEAD START

MOTION by James to receive and place on file the monthly report for October 2008; seconded by Ammons.

Putman asked for clarification of the second to last bullet of the report on page 44 regarding the option for parents to “work-off” their co-payment for childcare when they use the “full day” option and whether or not Head Start and Early Head Start were full day programs. Liffick explained that Head Start and Early Head Start programs are free. However there are some 10 Hour programs used by working parents that are considered childcare due to the length of the day and these require a childcare payment. Most parents are eligible to apply to the state subsidy program, which is administered by Child Care Resource Services with the U of I. This enables the parent to pay a co-payment and the state pays the remaining childcare fee.

Nudo inquired about the 2009 budget projections listed on page 43 of the report. Liffick responded that over-all in the last 8 years Head Start has essentially suffered an 11% cut across the nation. Their last budget increase was 1.5%, 2 years ago. They have not received a cost of living increase this year or last year. She stated Head Start has seen a significant jump in fuel prices, utilities and other commodities, which has caused them to struggle with the budget. She stated since August, which is their half way mark for the year they have made projections for the remaining 6 months every other week. They have already cut back in the classrooms and adjusted their food orders.

Gladney asked if Head Start had any reserve funds. Liffick said they do have a reserve fund, which should last 3 – 4 weeks if needed. Enrollment is doing well.

Liffick discussed the mention made at the third presidential debate by a candidate regarding the “fade out effect of Head Start”. The National Membership Association of Head Start released a paper stating that reliable and much more current research demonstrates that Head Start delivers long-term educational help, economic and law enforcement benefits. Anderson suggested a copy of this statement be added to the next mailing for committee members.

Putman stated she was not aware of a fade out effect and requested a summary. Liffick explained several years ago research was done which identified Head Start’s benefits faded out by the third grade. As a result, of the statement made at a presidential debate, Head Start released a paper in response. The paper points out the flaws in the study performed many years ago and there have been subsequent studies showing that Head Start is a beneficial program.

Motion carried.

MOTION by Gladney to approve the continuation of Head Start and Early Head Start Grant; seconded by James. **Motion carried.**

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY GRANTS

Rollins stated she brought her portion of the report, which lists her activities and the discussions held at JDC. She stated the September information was missing from the last packet submitted to the committee, so she brought this as well as the October information. Mr. Tracy had been out of the office so his comments are not in the report. Rollins stated she attempted to email the information to Ammons earlier so she could review it prior to the meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Anderson asked Weibel to provide an update on the creation of the Jury Selection Process Advisory Board. Weibel stated he and Judge Difanis agreed to follow the LRMP model in which members of the public were solicited to form a committee. He felt the size should be more than 10, but less than 20. Weibel asked Anderson to appoint two people from the Justice committee to create the announcement regarding the creation of the committee and an invitation to apply. He would then have Judge Difanis review it. The question for the committee is when to move forward and when the first meeting will take place. He was not sure if this needed to go through Policy or not. He will check if the open meetings act needs to be followed. He stated the meetings would be taped, but did not feel minutes should be taken.

Gladney stated he felt January would be a better time to begin the process since there will be some changes due to the election in November. Putman stated she would be pleased if the current committee to go on record as making a recommendation to the next committee to continue with the formation of this action group. Busey stated if the current committee could state what the focus of the group should be, then the standard appointments process followed and the announcement could state that the County Board seeks to form an advisory group with this goal and it could be published in January. Weibel agreed with this idea because it would give the committee a head start. Busey asked for the specific statement of focus. Putman stated the focus statement should be to promote public awareness of the jury procedures, remove barriers to jury service, and promote understanding of the jury selection process. Putman recalled the last meeting when there was a lengthy discussion with Judge Difanis. It was acknowledged that there are some barriers to citizens. Anderson stated the group would have the summary of items raised from last month's meeting to guide them.

Ammons asked if the State's Attorney had researched the question raised during, last months' meeting regarding the use of public safety sales tax to pay jury per diems. Ammons stated one of the barriers to citizens could be removed depending on the answer to the question. Busey stated the question was presented to the State's Attorney, but they have not had a chance to research it yet. James said he was not comfortable with the word "barrier". He stated he would rather see wording such as "fee and structure" and leave it up to the advisory board to determine what a barrier is and what is not.

Anderson asked for clarification of the motion. Nudo asked in whose domain is this committee to be set up because in the minutes Judge Difanis and Chair Weibel were supposed to handle it. Busey explained Chair Weibel had discussions with Judge Difanis, which has led back to Chair Weibel's recommendation of a committee structure similar to the LRMP steering committee. Busey stated there should be a statement of intent for the citizen's advisory group and the development of criteria as to who should serve on this committee. Busey asked if the committee would like to wait until the State's Attorney provides a response about the use of public safety sales tax for jury per diems.

Anderson asked if there was a motion on the creation of a citizen's advisory board. Busey stated at this time, the committee is providing direction. Weibel stated he could post the announcement if he knew what it should say. Busey stated what she understood from Putman as the intent for the advisory group – This is a citizen's advisory committee to promote public awareness of the jury selection procedures, including the removal of barriers to juror service and to promote improved participation in the jury duty process.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ammons asked for an update on the Nursing Home investigation. Anderson stated it is still ongoing. Ammons asked when the committee will become aware of the details of the investigation or if they will find out in the newspaper. Anderson stated she did not know how the paper could know if the board members do not know. Busey responded the assumption is that the nursing home will be informed before the news media is informed by the agency conducting the investigation; every effort will be made to make sure County Board members and Nursing Home Board of Directors members are made aware of the situation.

Ammons inquired what is the Nursing Home Board of Directors doing for the Nursing Home currently. Nudo explained that Dr. Lansford just gave a report less than a month ago with everything that was given to the Nursing Home Board by Mr. Scovatto, as well as Mr. Buffenbarger. Minutes are created and made available on the website of the monthly meetings. Anyone can attend these meetings to find out what is going on. The Board of Directors is developing marketing; developing employee relations and working to increase admittance.

Anderson added the investigators do not always share information. There was a complaint made and as a board member, she does not know whom it came from. Carter asked who is in charge of the investigation of the Nursing Home. Weibel stated a large part of the investigation is by the State of Illinois Public Health Department and there is one ~~few~~ *federal* investigator. We have no information as to what they are doing and they are not going to tell us until the investigation is complete. The county has only answered questions and provided records. Ammons stated whoever provided the copies of the records knows the content. Weibel explained that the records might contain confidential information, which cannot be shared with the public. Ammons stated that the board members are not a public body and they should certainly know what records have been requested. Busey explained legal counsel has barred this from happening at the request of the investigating agency. The investigating agency, the State's Attorney and legal counsel have made it known that none of the information is to be released to anyone other than the investigating agency.

James stated that he worked for the Housing Authority, which had federal investigations all the time and documents were requested, questions were asked and no one knew what the investigators were looking for. James stated demands should not be made of the investigators to provide information regarding an ongoing investigation because may be nothing and if someone talks about it, then this creates another problem.

Putman said the next meeting of the Nursing Home Board of Directors is Thursday, the 13th at 6:00p.m. Public participation is an early item on the agenda. Nudo added that Mr. Scovatto would make himself available 30 minutes before the meeting starts to answer questions about the prior meeting or any questions in general.

Nudo stated the question seems to keep coming up as to which committee the Nursing Home reports. It is his understanding that the Nursing Home Board of Directors works directly with Mr. Scavotto and the nursing home and the chair provides reports quarterly. We provide monthly reports upon request. The Justice and Social Services Committee no longer fit in directly with the nursing home. Anderson stated this body wanted to be kept informed and she and Nudo would do that. Weibel agreed this board wanted it set up this way.

Ammons hoped the new board would re-visit the issue. The language states the committee created for a time, but it is not specific. Ammons felt citizens should be concerned because the Board of Directors serves as a buffer. She felt that many county board members, who voted for the creation of the Nursing Home Board of Directors, were not clear that it would serve as a buffer. Buffers are used to prevent certain things from coming out. The County Board should deal with its constitutional obligation. It is not legitimate to state the nursing home was run into the ground because the people on the board were unqualified or inept.

James commented that many issues seem to be discussed thoroughly and then voted on. If members do not understand what they are voting for they should ask questions. Buffer is simply a term. It does not mean anything drastic or sinister. Anderson reiterated the Nursing Home Board of Directors meetings are open to the public and she encourages anyone with concerns to share them at public participation.

Putman recalled the discussion that led up to how the 7-member board would be appointed was that two members of the County Board, a democrat and a republican, ideally members of the Justice Committee could keep this committee informed. Putman felt it would be appropriate to list Nursing Home Board of Directors under the monthly reports so it could be a standing item on the agenda. Weibel felt this was a good idea but did not believe it should be called a report because report refers to something that is actually submitted. Perhaps it could be called Nursing Home updates.

DESIGNATION OF ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON COUNTY BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

Agenda Item 7A - Designation of NIMS Compliance Officer & Appointed Contact for Champaign designated for Consent Agenda.

Agenda Item 8A - Approval of Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Crisis Intervention Service Grant Agreement designated for Consent Agenda.

Agenda Item 9A - Intergovernmental Agreements for Animal Impound & Control Services with the Village of Broadlands designated for Consent Agenda.

Agenda Item 10B - Continuation of Head Start & Early Head Start Grant designated for Consent Agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay Rhodes
Administrative Secretary

Secy's note: The minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.

Changes approved at the January 5, 2009 meeting are noted by strikethrough and italics.